(In million tonnes)

Year	Demand	Supply
2008-09	72.72	75.67
2009-10	74.26	76.45

As per these projections, the requirement of wheat can be met from the domestic resources.

Storage facilities for foodgrains

2059.DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that public sector companies like Food Corporation of India (FCI) and Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) do not have sufficient number of godowns to store foodgrains;

(b) if so, the total number of godowns and the storage capacity of each godown;

(c) whether it is a fact that huge quantity of foodgrains stored in the godowns of FCI and CWC was lost due to poor storage and highly deficient management;

(d) if so, the loss of foodgrains during last three years, year-wise; and

(e) the steps taken by the Central Government to provide better storage facilities in the godowns of FCI and CWC?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No, Sir. There is sufficient storage capacity available with Food Corporation of India (FCI) and Central Warehousing Corporation (CWC) to store foodgrains. FCI have 1549 godowns with total storage capacity of 243.40 lakh tonnes (Owned & hired/Covered & CAP) against which total stocks held as on 31.10.2008 was 147.72 lakh tonnes. CWC have 492 godowns with total storage capacity of 98.15 lakh MTs against which stock held on 31.10.2008 •was 73.95 lakh MTs.

(b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. All godowns of FCI have been constructed as per ISI Code 607.1071 and likewise, CWC is storing foodgrains in its warehouses by adopting scientific methods. All godowns are being maintained properly. Hence, storage loss in FCI and CWC godowns is not attributed to poor storage and deficient management.

(e) Steps taken by the Central Government to provide better storage facilities in the godowns of FCI and CWC are:-

(i) All godowns are constructed as per specification and foodgrains are stored by adopting scientific storage practices.

(ii) Adequate dunnage material, fumigation covers and chemicals are provided in all the godowns.

(iii) Prophylactic and curative treatments are carried out regularly and timely for the control of insects and pests.

(iv) Foodgrains in 'cover and plinth' (CAP) storage are stored on elevated plinths and wooden crates are used as dunnage material. Stacks are properly covered with specifically fabricated low density black polythene water proof covers and tied with nylon ropes/nets.

(v) Regular inspections of the stocks/godowns are undertaken by qualified and trained staff.

(vi) The principle of 'First In First Out' (FIFO) is adopted to the extent possible so as to avoid longer storage of foodgrains in the godowns.

(vii) Only covered wagons are used for movement of foodgrains so as to avoid damages during transit.

Price Monitoring Cell

2060.SHRI BANWARI LAL KANCHHAL: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a Price Monitoring Cell (PMC) was set up for monitoring and availability of essential commodities;

(b) if so, the details thereof and whether the rise in prices have been checked and whether the essential commodities are available freely;

(c) whether the prices of wheat, pulses and edible oils have risen manifold; and

(d) if so, the steps taken to bring down the rising prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI TASLIMUDDIN): (a) and (b) The Price Monitoring Cell (PMC) in the Department of Consumer Affairs is entrusted, *inter-alia,* with the task of monitoring the prices of 17 essential commodities in the country viz., rice, wheat, atta, gram, tur/arhar, masoor, moong, urad, tea, milk, sugar, vanaspati, mustard oil, groundnut oil, potato, onion and salt, based on the information received from the State Food and Civil Supplies Departments. Information on Retail Prices is received on daily basis from 27 centres of the country, and on Wholesale Prices from 37 centres of the country on weekly basis.

The PMC prepares agenda Notes for the consideration of high level meetings such as the High Powered Price Monitoring Board, Committee of Secretaries and the Cabinet Committee on Prices, which regularly review the prices and availability of essential commodities and recommend appropriate action.

(c) Retail prices of wheat, which was steady at Rs. 12 per kg in Delhi centre, for the last two year, has now shown a marginal increase of Rs. 1 per kg since mid of January 2008, prices stabilized at Rs. 13 per kg. Prices of pulses, especially of tur, urad and masoor dais, increased during the current year, largely on account of shortfall in production due to decline in acreage and crop damage in pulses growing regions. Retail prices of edible oils declined since the last six months.

Analysis of retail prices of pulses at Delhi centre is given below.

Retail price of tur dal which stabilized at Rs. 41 per kg since November 2007, started rising since mid June 2008 and is now Rs. 50 per kg. Retail price of urad dal which was steady at Rs. 37 per kg